

# **RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2009 MEETING**

**Board Members Present: John Rupp, Chair; Michael Lewis; Edward Field; William Kennedy; and Rochelle Bates Lee.**

**Absent: Thomas Deller and John MacDonald**

**Also Present: Alfred J. Moscola (General Manager); Lori Caron Silveira (Outside General Counsel); Andrew Prescott (Outside Labor Counsel); Henry Kinch; Maureen Neira; Mark Therrien; Ellen Mandly, and other members of RIPTA's senior staff and members of the public whose names are listed on the meeting sign-in sheet.**

**Agenda Item 1: Approval of the Minutes of December 18, 2008 Meeting**

**Mr. Rupp began the meeting at 12:45 and wished everyone a Happy New year. Next he asked if the Board members had an opportunity to review the minutes of the December 18, 2008 Board of Directors meeting. The members indicated that they had and Mr. Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Director Lewis seconded the motion; the minutes were unanimously approved.**

## **Agenda Item 2: General Manager's Report**

**Mr. Moscola began by saying fuel prices have fallen and RIPTA paid the low price of \$1.52 per gallon on December 26, 2008 and that the current price paid on January 23, 2009 was \$1.85 a gallon. Mr. Moscola reminded the Board that the budgeted price for fuel was lowered to \$3.60 per gallon at the September Board meeting. He said that as of last Friday the 2009 average fuel price was \$2.91 and while fuel remains low he cautioned that the price was \$4.50 a gallon as recently as the start of this fiscal year.**

**Mr. Moscola reported that he is researching the possibility of locking in a fuel rate from February 1st to the end of this fiscal year. He will report back to the Board when he has more details. Mr. Rupp added that this is an effort to anticipate next year's budget and deal with the current budget shortfall. Mr. Rupp and Mr. Moscola have been checking numerous sources, including the department of energy, in an effort to forecast future fuel prices. Mr. Field wondered if there were restrictions on locking in a price beyond the current fiscal year and Mr. Moscola responded that our vendor is willing to discuss locking in for 5 months and is open to further discussions beyond that.**

**Mr. Rupp asked about entering contracts that transcend the fiscal year end and Ms. Silveira noted old case law had tied the length of**

contracts for quasi public entities to the tenure of the members of the Board, but that is no longer true.

Next Mr. Moscola reported that no official date has been set for RIPTA to appear before the House Finance Committee. He said he and Mark Therrien had attended a hearing the previous Friday at House Finance regarding Article 13 of the Governor's Supplemental Budget which includes for RIPTA a half penny which totals \$2.2 million from the underground storage tank fund. He and Mr. Therrien answered a few questions from Chairman Costantino and committee members. They kept their remarks brief but stressed that RIPTA is counting on receiving the \$2.2 million. The Department of Environmental Management (DEM) testified in opposition to RIPTA receiving the \$2.2 million in funding.

Mr. Moscola reported that the recently purchased Dodge Sprinter is on the property and invited the Board members to view it. He stated that the vehicle will be put into service in approximately a week and staff will monitor testing results.

Finally, Mr. Moscola reminded the Board that they requested an update on the construction of the new paratransit facility at this meeting and every other Board meeting thereafter. Mr. Moscola introduced Mike Burke the Clerk of the Works to give an overview of the project and answer questions.

**Mr. Burke introduced himself and said construction of the new paratransit building began in late August/early September and construction is 18% complete with much of the work below ground level. He said they are finished with all issues related to soil removal and disposal and the removal of underground water is ongoing and will be complete in about a month. Winter conditions have been less than ideal, but they are progressing well and have not missed a day of work due to inclement weather. Steel erection will begin in 10 days, maybe sooner and then progress will be more apparent.**

**Mr. Burke said that to date, three change orders had been processed, none of which impacted the construction schedule. The first was a \$795 credit to RIPTA for a project sign, the second was \$175,000 for the removal of unforeseen material called daily cover to the RI Central Landfill and the third was \$193,000 for the removal and disposal of soil at a Massachusetts landfill. He explained that RI Central Landfill would not accept this soil after testing was done on the material.**

**He noted that they are working under winter conditions, meaning all exposed excavations must be covered with thermal blankets and the ground heated to prevent frost. He described the trailer used to heat water and then the ground to prevent frost. Mr. Burke said the project has had one minor injury to a worker, a cut requiring a few stitches.**

**Mr. Burke asked if there were questions and Mr. Kennedy asked why the fill was not accepted in Rhode Island and if it was hazardous. Mr.**

**Burke said it was non-hazardous daily cover that did not meet the site's requirements. Mr. Moscola said the change orders were within budget and covered by construction contingencies.**

**Ms. Lee asked about the workforce on the site and what will happen between now and his next report. Mr. Burke said over the next month or two the workforce of 15 – 20 people will double or triple in size to 50 -60 people on site daily. Once the underground work and the footings and foundation are complete, the steel workers come in to erect everything and then the concrete will be poured. After this, the plumbers and electricians begin their work. Ms. Lee asked who the subcontractors report to and Mr. Burke said they report to him and he issues daily job reports to RIPTA, which details all personal on site. Ms. Lee asked how many of the subcontractors are Rhode Islanders and Mr. Burke guessed half or more with the minority participation being about 16%. Mr. Kennedy asked if it was US steel and Mr. Burke said he personally verified that it is.**

**Mr. Field asked if he anticipates any other use of contingency fees and Mr. Burke said he did not at this time. Mr. Rupp thanked Mr. Burke and asked he notify Mr. Field and Mr. Moscola immediately if there are any more contingency fees or challenges to the budget. He also asked that the percentage of minority contractors be verified and Mr. Burke replied minority contractor status is ongoing. Mr. Rupp said that this is RIPTA's biggest expenditure in difficult times and it is important that this project stay on budget.**

**Mr. Rupp announced that he would entertain public comments at agenda item # 5, the new fee structure for bus passes for seniors and people with disabilities.**

**Agenda Item 3: Finance Committee Report**

**Agenda Item 4: FY 2009 Budget Update**

**Mr. Moscola asked Mr. Field to give the Finance Committee report. Mr. Field said the Finance Committee met on January 16, 2009 and the meeting was attended by Mr. MacDonald, RIPTA staff and himself.**

**They discussed the staff summary in detail, particularly pages 2 and 3. Mr. Field remarked that the award of the half penny is still an unknown, but the rest of the financial information is solid and the current budget deficit is \$1.3 million. Staff identified additional monies available to RIPTA and he complimented staff on their work in this area. Mr. Field finished his report by suggesting that the Board approve the revised budget as presented in the staff summary.**

**Ms. Lee asked if this was an interim or revised budget. Mr. Rupp said the budget need not be renamed as this is just an update on the budget status. Mr. Field agreed with this characterization and suggested we acknowledge this as an effort by staff to reduce the deficit and revise the total deficit the number. Director Lewis agreed.**

**Mr. Kennedy wondered if we had moved on to agenda item # 4 the FY**

**2009 Budget Update. Ms. Silveira asked that the minutes reflect that item # 3 was discussed and we have now moved on to item # 4. Mr. Rupp said the minutes should be clear that the Finance Committee Report was for discussion only.**

**Mr. Rupp noted the effort by staff to bring down costs while taking into account the dramatic drop in fuel prices. He noted that fuel is a volatile area and prices could skyrocket in a matter of months so we must remain vigilant.**

**Ms. Mandly noted Mr. Field's suggestion that the budget be approved as presented and asked if this was an open motion. Mr. Field withdrew his suggestion. Mr. Rupp clarified that this is a status report based on current fuel prices and the possible addition of a half penny from the Governor. Ms. Lee asked if Article 13 relates to only RIPTA and was told that other items are included in this Article of the Supplemental Budget. Ms. Neira answered questions from Ms. Lee on the budget assumptions.**

**Ms. Neira discussed page 3 of the staff summary, an analysis of the FY 2009 Deficit. She said the Governor's supplemental budget contained 3 items which affect RIPTA. They are: 1) the additional half penny contained in Article 13 representing approximately \$2.2 million, 2) Article 4 which requests the creation of the OPED Trust (GASB #45) be deferred to FY 2011, 3) a slight reduction in the amount of debt service.**

**Ms. Neira said the FY 2009 budget is contingent upon legislative approval of the Governor's supplemental budget, which will be finalized in a few weeks and she may come back to the Board at the February meeting with a final revision to the FY 2009 Budget.**

**Ms. Lee asked Ms. Neira to describe the service modifications and the positions that were considered for elimination. Ms. Neira said the September service modifications proposed cutting 11 positions however there were also 12 vacancies in staffing levels and therefore the service reductions never translated into layoffs. Mr. Rupp asked if this resulted in reduced overtime and Ms. Neira said it did and that was the intent.**

**Director Lewis said this shows progress and good effort by staff as well as the Governor. He cautioned that much of this is contingent upon the General Assembly's approval and we still have a \$1.3 million dollar deficit so we can't be complacent. Mr. Moscola said he is aware of this and that while he is hopeful that RIPTA receives the additional half penny and he and his staff will continue to work to identify budget reductions.**

**Mr. Kennedy made a motion to approve. Director Lewis said the motion is for approval of the budget status report. Ms. Lee seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**



## **Agenda Item 5: New Fee Structure for Bus Pass Card Program for Seniors & People with Disabilities**

**Henry Kinch addressed the board to discuss the new fee structure for the bus pass card program for seniors and people with disabilities. Mr. Kinch said that pursuant to the administrative procedures act, a public hearing was held at RIPTA on December 17, 2008 to discuss this issue. He said the hearing was attended by 16 people, 11 of whom testified and 15 written comments were received. Mr. Kinch said the majority of the oral and written comments were against the change.**

**Mr. Kinch referenced Exhibit A of the staff summary which lists the details of RIPTA's current policy, the proposed new policy and a proposal by RIPTA's Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) and he read the details of each policy. The expected additional revenue raised by implementing the new RIPTA policy would be approximately \$170,000 and the revenue raised from the ATAC proposal would be \$116,996. He said the waiting period for replacement cards is a suggestion to curtail potential fraud.**

**Director Lewis asked if there were restrictions on the use of the pass and Mr. Kinch replied that the fare structure is governed by federal policy which recommends charging seniors and disabled half fare during peak hours. Currently, State law has a means testing fare provision which allows low income residents of Rhode Island to ride**

free. Next Mr. Kinch outlined the lost and found policy.

Mr. Field asked about the ridership numbers and Mr. Kinch said about 6,500 disabled Rhode Island residents ride each year. Mr. Field suggested accepting the ATAC proposal which he deemed reasonable.

Mr. Rupp asked for public comment. Mr. Kennedy spoke and said he is opposed to raising fees for seniors, disabled and the working poor.

Mr. Kennedy spoke passionately and at length about those on fixed incomes who can least afford the fee hike and finished by saying he wants the policy to remain the same. Mr. Kennedy stated that RIPTA is in the business of helping people at which point Mr. Rupp interjected that RIPTA is in the business of providing transportation and we too have to pay our bills.

Mr. Rupp suggested considering a compromise. Ms. Lee commented that the revenue seemed somewhat small and asked for clarification on the ATAC lost pass proposal. Mr. Kinch described the ATAC proposal and answered questions on potential revenue. Director Lewis commented that revenue enhancements must come from somewhere and we need to be fair while also being mindful of saying no to every proposal. Mr. Kennedy remarked that the proposals always affect the low income groups and Mr. Rupp said those same groups also receive the benefits.

**Mr. Rupp asked for public comments and Ms. Silveira clarified that comments should relate to this agenda item only.**

**Mr. Rupp recognized Bob Coffey, the Co-Chair of the ATAC Committee. Mr. Coffey began by saying ATAC gets excellent cooperation from Mr. Moscola and RIPTA staff and that they receive good data and have good communication. He complimented RIPTA's Ride Program efforts and stop announcements as compared to other systems. Mr. Coffey discussed how ATAC came up with their proposal and how RIPTA transportation contributes to their quality of life.**

**Next, Richard Bidwell from the Gray Panthers spoke and he stressed that the proposal would affect those who can least afford it and it does not seem fair. He said that \$25.00 is a lot of money to those living on \$600 dollars a month. Mr. Bidwell said if seniors and disabled are forced to go without transportation due to the cost increases it will cause problems in every area of their lives like visiting spouses in nursing homes, socializing with family and getting around in general. Mr. Bidwell finished by saying he does not support the ATAC proposal.**

**A conversation was held between the Board members regarding lost passes and the replacement procedures and fees and the proposed increase in pass price.**

**Mr. Rupp recognized Mr. Padroff who identified himself as a RIPTA rider since 1991. Mr. Padroff spoke at length on a variety of topics. Mr. Padroff said that charging \$25.00 for a pass for seniors and disabled is obscene and ridiculous.**

**Marjorie Rogers addressed the Board and protested the \$25.00 fare increase. She suggested a lesser increase in the fee structure, possibly \$10.00. Ms. Rogers stated that, she like many other senior and disabled people depend on RIPTA as their only method of transportation to get to the doctor and do her shopping. Ms. Rogers said she lives on social security and reiterated her suggestion that if the fee for the bus card has to be raised, that it be raised to \$10.00.**

**Following Ms. Rogers comments Mr. Rupp called for a brief recess. When the meeting resumed Mr. Field reiterated his motion to accept the ATAC proposal.**

**Steve Farrell asked to comment as he did not get an opportunity to do so before the break. Mr. Rupp agreed and Mr. Farrell stated his opposition to the new RIPTA fee structure and asked this be noted in the record and that he also opposes the ATAC proposal. Mr. Farrell noted that the current policy has been in place a very long time and asked the Board to consider a more modest increase to seniors and disabled bus card fees. He said that currently there is no waiting period for replacement of lost or stolen passes and he suggested that waiting 15 to 20 days before reissuing is sufficient. He agreed with**

**Mr. Kennedy that those affected are the most vulnerable and can least afford it. He asked the Board to rethink the proposals.**

**Mr. Rupp asked when the current policy was put into effect and Mr. Kinch replied about 30 or 40 years ago. Mr. Rupp asked if there were additional public comments. There were not.**

**Ms. Lee asked for clarification of motion on the floor. Mr. Kinch said Mr. Field had made a motion to accept the ATAC proposal. Ms. Lee said she was troubled by the waiting period and wondered why one is needed if the card is deactivated once it is reported lost. She said going from no waiting period to 30 days is significant and that is a long time to be without a bus pass. She added that the money RIPTA will receive by charging for lost cards does not seem worth the hardship to the riders. Mr. Field agreed and said he does not see a reason to delay replacing lost cards.**

**Mr. Field amended his motion and moved that the Board accept the ATAC proposal with the time delays in parentheses deleted and amended to say 3rd and subsequent lost passes will cost \$20.00 to replace. Ms. Lee said if we tinker with the figures on the sheet it will affect the anticipated revenues and suggested delaying the decision. Mr. Rupp stated his concern over a delay in taking action because RIPTA could be before House Finance next week and we need to make the hard decisions.**

Mr. Rupp noted that the policy has not changed in 30 years and he feels that the impact is not too severe. Ms. Lee disagreed saying transfers have gone from a dime to fifty cents, fares have been increased and service has been cut and she said 90% of revenue sources have been adjusted. Mr. Rupp said RIPTA is still losing money even with these changes and we are not yet where we need to be. He said these issues can be revisited in the future, but for now these measures are being contemplated to get us through this difficult time. Ms. Lee wondered if the savings is worth the bad PR RIPTA will suffer and the problems it will cause for the legislators when they receive complaints from their elderly and disabled constituents. Mr. Rupp said he believes the increased revenue is worth it. Ms. Lee asked what proposal Mr. Rupp supports and he said no fare increase but adopt the RIPTA proposal for replacement cards. He said if the numbers are correct 15 – 20% of first cards issued are lost which demonstrates a big constituency that loses cards.

Director Lewis seconded Mr. Field's motion as amended. He said the Board should vote it up or vote down or table this proposal until the next Board meeting and while he respects the public comments on the impacts of the changes, he feels a 30 - 40 year old fee structure needs to be revisited. He reiterated his second of Mr. Field's motion.

Ms. Silveira noted that the proposal had been promulgated in compliance with the administrative procedures act which requires

**advertising and public hearings and the issue needs to remain viable by a vote today or at the next Board meeting so RIPTA does not lose the benefit of the expenses incurred in complying with the act.**

**Director Lewis said he respects ATAC's willingness to put an alternate proposal on the table, which he is sure they did not do willingly but because of their longstanding relationship with RIPTA and an understanding of the need for a painful change.**

**Mr. Rupp clarified that the motion on the floor is to approve the ATAC Proposal without the waiting period and asked for a roll call vote. Ms. Lee asked for a clarification on the motion. Mr. Field reiterated his motion is for approval of the ATAC Proposal of \$10.00 for the 1st pass, \$15.00 for the 2nd pass and \$20.00 for the 3rd and subsequent passes with no waiting time for replacement of lost passes and with the passes being valid for a period of 5 years and with an annual monthly increase until the pass reaches \$25.00 in five years for new applicants. After the motion was repeated and clarified it was seconded by Director Lewis. A roll call vote was taken Michael Lewis, John Rupp, Ed Field and Rochelle Lee voted in favor and Bill Kennedy voted against. The motion carried by a vote of 4 to 1**

#### **Agenda Item 6: Ride Service Under ADA/DEA**

**Chairman Rupp announced that this agenda item for Ride Service under ADA/DEA would be tabled at this time.**

## **Agenda Item 7: Ride Contract Update**

**Chairman Rupp announced that this agenda item on the Ride Contract Update would also be tabled at this time.**

## **Agenda Item 10: Federal Stimulus Package**

**Chairman Rupp noted that Director Lewis would need to leave soon and asked that he comment on the Federal Stimulus Package.**

**Director Lewis said he would comment on the anticipated federal stimulus package as it relates to transportation only. He cautioned that the current house bill is still subject to amendment and a companion senate bill is in process, but generally these bills currently calls for \$30 billion in highway spending this federal fiscal year. States will get a portion of the same amount from that \$30 billion as they would get in a normal federal program and for Rhode Island this means an additional federal disbursement this year of approximately \$150 million to be used on capital programs.**

**Director Lewis stressed that the money cannot be used for operating funds because the goal of the stimulus package is to put people to work. He said there is a transit component for inner city rail that**



**totals about \$12 billion dollars, which is also subject to disbursement.**

**Director Lewis noted there are strings attached such as the caveat that 50% of the money would have to be under contract within the first 120 days following passage of the bill a very strict and difficult timeline. He noted that any state that does not meet the 50% requirement in the timeframe allowed will lose the difference which will be recaptured and redistributed. He said it is important to Rhode Island that our distribution be under contract on time which will put us in position to get more federal money unused by other states. He reiterated that this package still needs final approval and stressed that the money cannot be used for operations.**

**Ms. Lee asked exactly what the money can be used for and Director Lewis replied anything that is eligible under title 23, which is roadway construction such as bridge construction, highways, sidewalks, traffic signals, and other traditional federally funded highway work, plus infrastructure improvement.**

**Mr. Rupp asked if bus purchases would be allowed and the Mr. Moscola commented that the stimulus package keeps changing but he is prepared to spend the money in the event bus purchases are allowed. Director Lewis added that different committees within congress are reviewing the details and the best plan is to be prepared for the most stringent language, such as having projects under contract within 120 days and all of this is subject to further discussion and the President's signature.**

### **Agenda Item 13: Amended & Restated RIPTA By-Laws**

**Chairman Rupp asked that due to time constraints the discussion of the amended and restated by-laws would be tabled at this time. Ms. Silveira asked that any comments be sent to her.**

### **Agenda Item 8: RFP 09-13 Workers Compensation Defense Counsel**

**Roger Mencarini addressed the Board to discuss the procurement for Workers Compensation Defense Counsel services. Mr. Mencarini said a proposal was issued and publicly advertised and two firms submitted proposals. After evaluation by RIPTA's RFP Evaluation Committee the recommendation came back to award the contract to Hanson, Curren, LLP of Providence. He said it is a one-year contract with up to four annual renewals and the yearly historical cost is \$30,000.**

**Mr. Rupp commented that he attended the hearing on RIPTA's legal services and believes the contract could cost less as the rates are very favorable. Director Lewis moved that the contract be awarded to Hanson, Curren LLP as recommended. Mr. Field seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

### **Agenda Item 11: RFP 09-11 Bus Filters**

**Mr. Mencarini addressed the Board to discuss the procurement for bus filters saying staff recommends the award of contracts to the various vendors listed in the staff summary. He explained that the bid covers an assortment of filters used in various RIPTA vehicles and the estimated yearly cost of the contract is \$52,000. This contract is for one year with four renewal options.**

**After Mr. Mencarini answered a question Director Lewis made a motion to award the contracts as recommended by staff. Mr. Field seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item 12: RFP 09-14 Nova Bus Parts**

**Next Mr. Mencarini discussed the procurement for Genuine Nova Bus Parts. He said that quality and delivery were important factors in this procurement and the bid was developed to reflect that. One bidder, Prevost Car US Inc, submitted a bid response and staff conducted a single bid analysis. Staff deemed the price offered by Prevost Car US to be fair and recommends the award of a one year contract with up to four annual renewals to Prevost Car US. Based upon historical usage, the value of this contract is approximately \$375,000 annually which represents a 10% savings over current list prices.**

**Following discussion of the procurement Director Lewis moved to award the contract to Prevost Car US as recommended by staff. Mr.**

**Field seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

## **Agenda Item 9: Consolidation of Legal Work Through a RIPTA General Counsel**

**Mr. Rupp addressed the next agenda item a discussion of consolidating RIPTA's legal services through in house counsel and said this agenda item is for discussion only at this time. He asked that this be put on the agenda as part of his continuing efforts towards overall cost management and he is still evaluating the merits of in-house counsel and whether contracting out for legal services or managing the costs in a different way can provide savings. Mr. Rupp said he would like this to be a continuing discussion and asked for the opinion of the other Board members.**

**Director Lewis said he supports the idea. Ms. Lee asked if the Board was being asked to consider hiring an internal attorney and Mr. Rupp said yes if a candidate could be identified who has all the skills RIPTA would need. Ms. Lee asked if all legal work was currently and historically contracted out and Mr. Rupp said yes. Bill Kennedy said he is comfortable with the outside counsel we currently use and is unsure in-house counsel would be a cost savings.**

**Mr. Rupp acknowledged the complexities of the issue due to labor contracts, but feels it is an important conversation to have because Rhode Island needs to manage itself and reform the way things are**

**done and RIPTA needs to strive to become a bigger and better agency that runs more efficiently.**

**Mr. Rupp responded that at this point we are just beginning the conversation of an in-house counsel and similar initiatives to gain efficiencies.**

## **Agenda Item 12: Public Comment**

**Mr. Rupp asked for public comments and recognized Mark Therrien who spoke on behalf of Carlos Lopez, Director of Constituent Services for the City of Cranston who was here representing the Mayor of Cranston. Unfortunately, Mr. Lopez had to leave before the public comment period and asked Mr. Therrien to comment on his behalf. Mr. Therrien said Mr. Lopez has received a number of complaints regarding the removal of bus service on Park Avenue in Cranston and the city is worried about the economic impact due to the ongoing renovation of the Park Cinema. Mr. Therrien said he has already set up a time to meet with Mr. Lopez and Cranston officials to discuss their concerns.**

**Mr. Kennedy said he had spoken to Mr. Lopez prior to the meeting and was told he'd received over a dozen calls complaining about the existing service and asked if something can be done. Mr. Therrien replied that the change had been instituted due to a bridge being out in Cranston and he will need research the issue further.**

**Mr. Rupp noted that if RIPTA does not come up with additional funding or if we lose the half penny proposed by the Governor, these are the types of painful cuts that we will be forced to make.**

**Mr. Field suggested that an RFP be written and created by charitable groups such as the Rhode Island Foundation and other major charitable groups creating a subsidy fund for those affected by changes to the senior and disabled pass. Mr. Rupp agreed that the community should help.**

**Steve Farrell, President of ATU, spoke and voiced his opposition to the changes to the 20 line on Elmwood Avenue in Cranston which is an abbreviated version of the old 20 line which was on the Providence/Cranston line for over 70 years and leads into the Cranston government district, Cranston East High School and the Rolfe Square business area. Mr. Farrell said he believes the route should be re-implemented as it previously existed. He said this as a union member and as a resident of Cranston.**

**Joe Cole also voiced his opposition to the changes to the line saying it is a very important line and the line should be continued on to Rolfe Square. He said this line is important to the revitalization in the Park Cinema area. Mr. Cole said he was unable to attend the December Board meeting and wanted to comment that he was unhappy with what he read about the Blue Ribbon Commission in the paper**

**because they did not give RIPTA any guidance in going forward. He said RIPTA is in the business of transporting people and if we keep cutting service we won't carry anyone.**

**Mr. Rupp responded that we also need to operate in a manner that allows us to pay our bills. He said the Governor has gone to great lengths to help RIPTA in a difficult economy. Mr. Rupp spoke candidly saying school districts, fire departments, cities and towns and everyone else are all cutting back and we need to be equally prudent in the short term and in the long term we have been working hard to identify the type of transportation system Rhode Island needs.**

**Mr. Farrell spoke again commenting on Director Lewis' remarks and asking how much of the \$150 million Federal Stimulus earmarked for Rhode Island would be put toward transit. As Director Lewis had left the meeting Mark Therrien responded that Director Lewis was only talking about the highway program. He said in the transit program could have as much as \$14- \$20 million more for RIPTA for capital expenditures only.**

**Mr. Rupp thanked the speakers for their comments and moved on to the next agenda item.**

**Agenda Item 15: Adjournment**

**A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Field. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**Ellen M. Mandly**

**Recording Secretary**